



# Whoever Wins Mexico’s Election, Workers Lose

**MEXICO CITY, August 12** — “Vote by Vote,” demanded hundreds of thousands of supporters of liberal presidential candidate Andrés López Obrador in the streets of the capital and in many other cities nationwide. With huge demonstrations, seizures of streets, blocking bank entrances and even the stock exchange, many workers, students and people in general think the government’s Institute of Federal Elections will give the Presidency to Lopez Obrador of the Party of Revolutionary Democracy over the right-wing party candidate Felipe Calderon of the National Action Party (PAN). This election dispute is a fight between various Mexican bosses to control the profits from oil (including oil giant PEMEX), minerals, energy, telecommunications and health care .

In these struggles and in discussions, Progressive Labor Party has strengthened new communist youth participating in these activities. These youth have distributed leaflets and CHALLENGE, attacking elections as a sham and calling for building a communist revolution. The workers have responded positively, although with much ideological struggle.

Workers around the world should oppose the capitalist electoral farce used to maintain the political system. Workers are won to think that by voting for one candidate or another capitalism can get better for workers, something that has never occurred in the history of capitalism.

Every presidential candidate represents one sector or another of the ruling class. The openly fascist Calderón has promised “jobs for all” and new foreign investments. Unemployment, however, is essential for capitalism because it uses the unemployed to pressure those who have jobs to work more for lower wages.

Other bosses like López Obrador use different tactics. His much more deadly battle slogan is to “defend the poor.” But he has won the support of big capitalists. Using his populist image, he’s evicted the poorest people from the center of Mexico City to make space for the historical center project led by Carlos Slim (Mexico’s richest man and third richest in the world).

Slim owns TELMEX, of the Carso group, and much of the country’s real property. Instead of expanding the metropolitan transport system, including the subway, he invests in road construction to promote private cars, benefiting corporations like Ford, GM, Volkswagen, Nissan, etc.

No electoral party anywhere will respond to the real interests of the working class. These ruling-class politicians look for solutions to their crises within the system, not to change it. The only solution for the working class is to eliminate capitalism, its markets and profits, and establish a society in which no one is exploited or oppressed. The great challenge is to organize ourselves with all the millions of the world’s workers and students, not to chant “vote by vote,” but “worker by worker” to forge a communist revolution and end this murderous capitalist system. ☸

# Liberals Cry ‘Out of Iraq’ To: PLOT MORE WAR

As killing fueled by U.S. imperialism rages and intensifies from Beirut to Baghdad to Kabul, Ned Lamont won the Connecticut Democratic Senate primary over incumbent Joe Lieberman on an “anti-war” platform. Lieberman backed the war in Iraq and ran for Vice President with Al Gore in 2000.

Their slugfest boils down to a dispute merely over the tactics for accomplishing U.S. rulers’ two overriding tasks: battling increasingly militant Islamic forces for control of the Middle East and its oil and mobilizing the nation for a future conflict with a rival superpower. Lamont, in fact, poses the greater danger, because his phony “Out-of-Iraq” message can trick workers into supporting the rulers’ agenda for broader wars.

George W. Bush’s bungling is worsening matters for U.S. imperialism in the Middle East. The first U.S.-backed United Nations resolution aimed at ending Israel’s war on Hezbollah quickly proved a deadly farce. Within hours of its first passage, Israeli air strikes murdered dozens more Lebanese civilians. The more U.S.-made bombs Israel drops, the more leverage Hezbollah and its Iranian backers gain. Even though there is a cease-fire now, that’s no guarantee that the carnage will end anytime soon. Israeli leaders will pursue their self-interests no matter what Washington demands. Elsewhere, an increasingly lethal insurgency bordering on civil war prevents Exxon Mobil from pumping Iraqi crude. The Taliban remain at large in Afghanistan. And al Qaeda may have inspired a possible plot by British terrorists to try to blow up U.S. airliners.

This dismal picture has an important section of the ruling class saying it is time for Plan B: tactical

retreat from Iraq followed by regrouping and a massive re-invasion of the entire Persian Gulf region by a wide U.S.-led coalition.

Lamont’s exit timetable meshes with plans put forward by General William Odom, who complains that Bush’s Iraq fiasco has the U.S. “paralyzed in managing the region from the eastern Mediterranean [Israel, Lebanon, and Syria] to Afghanistan.” (Bloomberg Television, 8/11) Odom foresees a vast occupying force that includes European troops under U.S. command. “Upon our withdrawal, our allies will be far more likely to respond constructively to a U.S. bid to design a joint strategy for restoring regional stability in the Middle East.” (Nieman Watchdog, Harvard University, 7/17)

Another anti-Bush general, Wesley Clark, who carried out Clinton’s genocidal bombardment of Serbia, praised Lamont’s success in steering workers down the dead-end road to the polling booth and patriotism. “Lieberman’s defeat shows that the public is now engaged in politics.” (Wall Street Journal, 8/10) Clark reassured Journal readers that Democrats, including Lamont, indeed had the more effective war plan. “The truth is the Democratic Party — elected leaders, party regulars, and the big-time donors — pretty much agree on the failures of the administration, and even on the policies that need to be adopted, like stronger diplomacy and more reliance on allies and international organizations, coupled with a willingness to fully fund, rearm, strengthen, and use America’s armed forces.”

As for galvanizing society for world war, Lamont has a less heavy-handed approach than Lieberman. Lieberman co-founded the Democratic Leadership Council, which in a recent book, “With All Our Might,” espoused an openly-militarized Democratic Party and putting the economy “on a wartime footing.” The ruling class dreams of both. But there’s a hitch. As enlistment figures and opinion polls show, not many people so far, especially among traditionally Democratic voters, buy blatant militarism. Lieberman’s voter base among munitions workers at Sikorsky and Electric Boat may do so, to a certain degree, but among the general public “Vietnam-Syndrome” mistrust of the Pentagon prevails. So Lamont tries the back door to fascism. His big push is for health care reform, which has two ulterior motives: tightening government control of a key industry and getting people to view the state as “protector.”

For anyone who wants the bloodshed to stop, following Lamont and his ilk is a big mistake. “Peace” candidates turn out to be deadlier war-makers than “hawks.” Look at President Woodrow “He-Kept-Us-Out-of-War” Wilson of World War I infamy or Vietnam War criminal Lyndon Johnson, who ran against pro-war Barry Goldwater in 1964. Votes only legitimize the imperialist butchers. The end of profit-driven wars lies outside the electoral system, down a long road of struggle to destroy capitalism itself. ☸

## Lamont: A Billionaire Pedigree

Ned Lamont’s miraculous rise from nowhere bears all the signs of a full-court press by the liberal Eastern Establishment. First is his impeccable capitalist/imperialist pedigree. Lamont’s great-grandfather Thomas W., a partner of J.P. Morgan, helped write the financial parts of the post-World War I Versailles Treaty in favor of the U.S. Next come liberal flunkies Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, who stumped for Lamont among black workers in New Haven and Bridgeport. Moveon.org helped get out Lamont’s middle-class vote. Internet-based Moveon was created by Larry Rockefeller and others in an attempt to limit the damage from Clinton’s impeachment. The liberal New York Times endorsed Lamont in a July 30 editorial. A week later, it ran a column by Thomas Friedman entitled “Time for Plan B.” ☸



# Liberals’ ‘Just War’ Image Hides Racist Cause of Atrocities

The U.S. Army’s rape and torture of innocent people in Iraq should not be a shock to us. The extensive investigation and media coverage of 21-year-old Steven Green, the former private awaiting trial for the alleged murder and rape of an Iraqi family in Haditha, Iraq, is merely an attempt to re-mold the image of the U.S. military and scapegoat the lower-ranking troops.

This is not a case of a few “bad apples,” but an inevitable consequence of imperialist war. Atrocities and genocide occur when working-class youth of one imperialist army is conditioned to view the “enemy” as inferior using nationalism, racism and sexism. So when the bosses’ media starts decrying the very behavior it needs to field an army committed to its plans, we must look closely at, and understand, what the ideological differences among U.S. rulers mean for the working class.

Sections of the ruling class are furious at Bush & Co.’s method of handling the war, which is growing increasingly unpopular at home. The Bush administration’s failures have energized the liberal wing of the rulers who are desperate to: (1) unite U.S. workers behind the war; and (2) divide the Arab peoples against each other. The liberals want to distance themselves from the Bush gang and prefer to win workers over to the notion of a “just war,” that U.S. global dominance is not only necessary, but desirable for us and the world. They will spend time and money winning workers to the goals of U.S. imperialism — domination of the world’s resources, especially oil, and of cheap labor — and will work with rulers from other countries to build the image of a “multilateral,” international consensus on this agenda.

Yet the splits among U.S. rulers are purely tactical; they all agree with the greater imperialist goals. The liberal wing is angry at the Bush crowd’s incompetence and reck-

lessness in trying to run this war for oil on the cheap, economically and politically. The liberals and the Bush gang alike were mistaken in believing the war could be won as quickly as in 1991. However, the Bushites neglected to plan a long-term ideological campaign to win over U.S. workers and are now paying the political price. Here increasing numbers of working-class people are turning against the war; in the Middle East, various Arab groups have not only united against the U.S. but are being driven into the

**‘[T]he Bushites neglected to plan a long-term ideological campaign to win over U.S. workers and are now paying the political price.’**

arms of Iran and China, two of the U.S. rulers’ main competitors in the region.

To save the mess that Bush & Co. have made, the liberal sector of the U.S. ruling class will try to win over as many people in the anti-war movement as possible. Some in that movement are militantly opposed to imperialism, so the liberals want to channel their energy and militancy into various political campaigns within electoral politics instead of opposing imperialism itself.

Others reject the war because of individual acts of murder and gutter-racism such as the Abu-Ghraib prison tortures and the Haditha massacre, without rejecting the ruling class’s greater imperialist goals. By attaching these crimes to Bush & Co. — not tracing them to the inevitable consequences of capitalism itself — the liberals will attempt to restore the image of “honor” and “integrity” to the U.S. armed forces, legitimizing this imperialist butchery as a “just war.” However, the liberals’ image neg-

lects the military’s long-standing complicated relationship with fascists such as the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazis. After the white supremacist Aryan Nations’ graffiti was discovered in Baghdad recently, Scott Barfield, a gang detective with the U.S. Department of Defense, told the Southern Poverty Law Center’s “Intelligence Report”: “It’s not epidemic, but there is plenty of evidence we’re talking numbers well into the thousands [of fascists], just in the Army.... Only two have been discharged.”

The liberals’ hopes to build the “just-war” image to U.S. workers and the world hide the disgusting reality of their reliance on racism to fight and win wars. The liberals are in a tricky and contradictory position, wanting it both ways: the honorable “just-war” imagery reminiscent of World War II on the one hand, and committed killers loyal to imperialism on the other.

The rape and murder of the Iraqi family is a horrifying addition to the daily terror not only in Iraq but in much of the rest of the world. As long as capitalism exists there will inevitably be workers dying from imperialist wars and/or workers dying in the aftermath of disasters such as New Orleans. Workers should not support any sector of the ruling class, especially now that the liberals are on the offensive against Bush and trying to seize the anti-war feeling.

The Progressive Labor Party fights the ruling class no matter how much it hides its savage plans for the working class. Imperialism is necessary to capitalism. Ending imperialism means ending the nationalism, sexism and racism that keep the bosses’ profits flowing. PLP unites workers, students and soldiers internationally to fight for communist revolution and dump this barbaric system into the garbage can of history. ☸

## Big Oil Ordered Iraq War; Neo-Cons Just Followed Orders

By now — as CHALLENGE pointed out early on — most people agree that the invasion of Iraq was about oil, not about “weapons of mass destruction” or “bringing democracy to the Middle East.” But now it’s coming out that the most powerful ruling class interests, especially among the oil sector, were plotting for such an invasion because of Saddam’s “manipulation of oil markets,” a “destabilizing influence... to the flow of oil to international markets from the Middle East.” (As quoted from a Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) report, in “Armed Madhouse — Who’s Afraid of Osama Wolf,” by Greg Palast.) It was Big Oil, not the neocons, who conceived this war; the latter were just the instrument that carried it out, however ineptly.

Palast was able to get hold of a 323-page State Department report entitled, “Options for Iraqi Oil,” which, according to Palast, “was crafted in Houston under the tutelage of the oil industry,” organized by the James A. Baker III Institute. A former Secretary of State under Bush, Sr., Baker has as his “clients” the Rockefeller-owned Exxon Mobil (the world’s largest oil company), the Republican National Committee and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Palast says the State Department report shows that Big Oil’s decisive motive for invading Iraq was not so much its oil — “the last thing the oil industry wanted from Iraq in 2001 was a lot more oil” — nor “Saddam’s affection for euro currency nor even panic over oil supply.” Rather it was the fact that, “Tight markets have increased U.S. and global vulnerability to disruption and provided adversaries undue potential influence over the price of oil.” Iraq was a “swing producer” of oil. “Saddam was jerking the oil market up and down. One week he’s “supporting the Palestinian Intifada” and he cuts off oil shipments, spiking worldwide oil prices. Then he forgets the Intifada and pumps to the maximum allowed under the UN’s Oil-for-Food Program, causing oil prices to plummet.

Up and down, up and down — “Saddam was out of control.” And “control is what it’s all about,” one oilman told Palast. “It’s not about getting the oil, it’s about controlling oil’s price.” Within days of Bush’s November 2000 election, the Baker Institute warned: “In a market with so little cushion to cover unexpected events, oil prices become extremely sensitive to perceived supply risks. Such a market increases the potential leverage of [an] otherwise lesser producer such as Iraq....”

Falah Aljibury, an advisor to the Wall Street investment house Goldman Sachs, the Baker/Council on Foreign Relations group — and host to the State Department’s invasion-planning meetings in February 2001 — told Palast that, “Iraq is not stable, a wild card.” Saddam Hussein was, almost alone, setting the weekly world price of oil. He was driving the oil barons bonkers. So Rockefeller’s CFR concluded it was time for a “military assessment,” stating: “Saddam Hussein has demonstrated a willingness to threaten to use the oil weapon to manipulate oil markets.... [The] United States should

## ‘Peace Truce’ Will Lead to Wider Wars

After much haggling in the UN, particularly between France and the U.S., a “peace truce” has been imposed in the Israel-Lebanon war. Supposedly, the IDF (Israel “Defence” Forces) and the Hezbollah guerrillas will obey it. But the ceasefire has as much chance of making it as a cockroach in a chicken coop. Eventually, French troops will lead a UN “peacekeeping force” in Southern Lebanon. Meanwhile, several lessons can be drawn from this war:

- Israel’s touted military invincibility has been heavily damaged — 114 IDF soldiers killed in one month. Hezbollah and most observers are calling this a major defeat for the IDF. The NYTimes (8/16) cited Hezbollah’s “hard-won reputation as the only Arab force that fought Israel to a standstill.” Already, the blame game is causing big rifts inside the Israeli ruling class about “Who lost Lebanon?” It’s also led to rifts inside the White House. According to a Seymour Hersh New Yorker article, Dick Cheney, Bush and his national security advisor Elliot Abrams backed Israeli’s failed blitzkrieg, but Rumsfeld wasn’t 100% sure and Secy. of State Condi Rice was borderline.

- It has also caused rifts between the U.S. and the European bosses. A year ago, France and the U.S. united to kick the Syrians out of Lebanon and installed a “democratic” government in Beirut. Now U.S. rulers backed the Israeli air war which destroyed that whole U.S.-France plan.

- Bombings per se don’t win wars, even though they cause huge damage (1,000 Lebanese killed, nearly all civilians and almost a million displaced from their homes; Lebanon’s infrastructure smashed to smithereens by the Israeli Air Force). But still, Israel suffered a major defeat in the ground war at the hands of the well-trained and committed Hezbollah guerrillas.

- The U.S., Israel and their allies in the governments of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan have been exposed as the real Axis of Evil. Meanwhile, given the Israeli failure to destroy Hezbollah, its Iranian and Syrian backers have emerged as winners.

- The White House-Tel Aviv plan to bomb Iranian nuclear bunkers — Israel has acquired a load of U.S. bunker-buster bombs — must now be rethought. If the air war failed in tiny Lebanon, Iran, with 70 million people, much bigger and more powerful, could create a lot of problems for the U.S. in Iraq as well as for Israel in Lebanon and in Palestine’s Gaza and West Bank. The U.S. liberal rulers’ drive for more ground troops for all these potential wars will now be pushed more intensely. U.S. imperialists will need millions of soldiers to protect their oil empire from their rivals (Iran and its allies in Russia and China). Will a military draft follow?

Many in recent international anti-war demonstrations have been chanting “Hezbollah” as a response to the U.S.-Israeli fascist war-makers. This is a deadly mistake. Hezbollah is a reactionary organization which wants to impose an Iranian-type anti-worker fundamentalist system. From Teheran to NYC to Baghdad to Tel Aviv, workers, students and soldiers must organize to turn these wars into revolutionary struggles to get rid of their cause: capitalism and imperialism. That’s the goal of the communist PLP. Join us! ☸

### WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism — wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. Capitalism returned to the Soviet Union and China because socialism failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system, like wages and division of labor.

Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism — the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society’s benefits and burdens.

Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One International working class, one world, one Party.

Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. **Join Us!**

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CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$5.50. Subscription: \$15. Six months: \$10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202. September 6, 2006 Volume 39, No. 40

**This is a three-week issue of CHALLENGE. We will return to a bi-weekly on September 6.**

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# Victory Against Anti-Immigrant Kangaroo Court

After the month-long trial of three anti-racists (see CHALLENGE, 8/16), Judge Toni Bean, her voice quivering, mumbling and hesitating between each word, gave her verdict. She surveyed a courtroom packed with supporters for the defendants. High school students and teachers, clergy from an activist church, trade unionists, family, friends and members of a Farmingville area immigrant support group squeezed into the courtroom listening to her every word, with more supporters outside for lack of space.

This is not what Suffolk County bosses intended when they relentlessly pursued a trial of the three anti-racists arrested on July 16, 2005. Local politicians get elected exploiting racism and anti-immigrant hatred. They were determined to be tough on anti-racist supporters of immigrant workers.

These bosses, however, underestimated the working class when organized for class struggle. PLP members, who had participated in the original demonstration, acted, understanding that an attack on any worker is an opportunity for struggle in which communist ideas flourish and

new members can be recruited.

For nearly a year communists publicized this case — and the courts' racist, fascist character — in countless mass organizations. Resolutions were raised in several unions. Fundraisers were organized involving many new people. Contacts were made with the pro-immigrant organizations within Suffolk County. Attorneys were hired who live and work in the area but willing to take a stand in support of anti-racist protests. This struggle exposed thousands of workers to the case.

With the steady, dedicated effort of many comrades, hundreds of workers attended the month-long trial. The Judge, the prosecution and even the court officers were very aware of the daily presence of this multi-racial force. They're used to operating in private, their courtroom an inner sanctum never feeling working-class anger. Well, we brought in the light.

Everyone joining us in court found it unnerving and enlightening. People were shocked at the arrogant, racist treatment of everyone called before the Judge. Many who had promised to attend for just one day returned again and again to stand by the defendants. As one high school student told her teacher on the long drive home one day, "Now I understand what you mean by state power!"

Listening to Judge Bean's verdict we knew the essential purpose of the trial — to terrify workers and keep them out of Suffolk County — had been defeated. Whatever the verdict (though we are delighted it was "not



**Anti-racists demonstrate against anti-immigrant racist in Farmingville.**

guilty") the victory was ours. We had exposed the illusions many people had about "civil rights." We had recruited new members to PLP and to study groups and had developed and strengthened the leadership of the defendants who came through the process with a deeper commitment to the working class.

Outside the courthouse after the verdict, a woman from an immigrant rights group explained why all that we had done was so necessary: "I'm glad to see this victory today," she said, "for there are more battles coming. Soon it might be illegal to allow an undocumented worker to stay in your house. I'm sorry to say it, but there are bad things coming."

This worker understands the long road ahead. Our job is to bring her, and all workers, into PLP to help build the fight for communism. ☺

## As Copper Bosses' Profits Soar, Miners Strike

**CHILE** — On August 7, 2000 miners struck La Escondida, the world's largest private copper mine, mostly owned by two UK-Australian companies, BHP and Rio Tinto. La Escondida produces 8% of world production. The miners are demanding a 13% wage increase and a 16 million pesos bonus (\$29,400). The bosses' final offer was a 3% wage "hike" plus a \$5,500 low-interest loan, which amounts to a wage-cut since the loan will be re-paid from that 3%. The bosses also offered a \$15,600 lump-sum bonus.



**Chilean miners strike.**

The strike has impacted commodity markets. A prolonged disruption threatens copper availability worldwide when supplies are already tight.

The miners say soaring global copper prices, which have boosted mining profits, justifies their pay demand. The mine owners have invoked "force majeure," a procedure which gives them legal protection from being sued if they fail to live up to delivery contracts, such as for copper concentrate.

The Socialist Chilean government has sent riot cops to intimidate miners and their demonstrations. These bosses are worried since this company represents 2% of the country's economic output. The bosses' press has joined the anti-worker attacks, saying the miners are already the "best-paid" workers in Chile (El Mercurio, 8/8). But the bosses are making out like bandits, reaping super-profits from growing world demand, particularly from China. The workers' demands represent only 1% of the mine's profits since 2005. And recently, high school students in Chile waged militant protests fighting the cops for their own demands. The "Socialist" government has been exposed as just another capitalist State.

Other workers are looking to follow these miners in setting their own bargaining goals. "It looks likely that there could be copy-cat action, especially in Mexico and at other mines in Chile," said John Meyer, a mining analyst at Numis Securities in London. "This could be quite long-running, which is why the market is taking notice of it." (London Financial Times, 8/9)

Even though the strikers halted 60% of La Escondida production, it's using 2,000 contract workers to get out the remaining 40%. The strikers must win these contract workers to join the walkout. They can forge this unity by fighting for permanent jobs for these contract workers.

The miners need international solidarity from workers who face the same bosses' attacks: they make huge profits but want workers to make more sacrifices while the bosses use contract workers to divide us all and lower everyone's wages.

Capitalism has proven to be a dead-end worldwide even for the so-called high-paid. Workers must learn from struggles like these that without our labor power, the bosses cannot produce anything. Workers don't need bosses; they need to turn these struggles into a school for forging a revolutionary leadership to fight for communism. ☺

## NYC Workers' War Contract Signals Need to Mobilize vs. Profit System

**NEW YORK CITY, August 11** — "When the hell will she retire?" is the endlessly repeated question among workers in AFSCME's District Council 37. "She" is Lillian Roberts, the overtly corrupt and autocratic executive director of DC 37, the City's largest municipal union, with 120,000 members. The Council leadership negotiated a thoroughly mediocre deal with the City, after 13 months without a contract. Frustration is near universal within the union over the Roberts' regime's endless petty power plays, open collaboration with billionaire union-busting mayor Michael Bloomberg, and shameless sponging of union dues.

But the rank and file must see the contract struggle not just as ridding ourselves of one corrupt misleader but as a fight against capitalist attacks, war and rising fascism. With U.S. rulers facing stiff competition worldwide, they're looking to smash even the few organized workers that still have even meager benefits. These cuts finance defense of their empire. In reality every contract is a war contract.

The union misleaders' job is to stifle struggle, not lead it. They paint Bush as the sole source of all workers' problems and rally behind the Democratic bosses. None of them ever criticize capitalism, even supposed "militants" like the Transit Workers' Roger Toussaint or Andy Stern, head of the recent split-off from the AFL-CIA. They still treat unions as a business.

The DC 37 contract is nearly as bad as the last one. Disgust with the leadership is still entrenched. The union leadership put nothing on the table for the workers during the entire ten-month negotiations. Instead, Roberts orchestrated a sham behind-the-scenes vote to "endorse" Bloomberg's re-election and then threw millions in dues money into his \$70-million campaign.

True to form, they went hat in hand to the City and didn't hold a single rally or work action, or reach out to any other workers for support. In effect, the new DC 37 contract is a pay-cut, falling below infla-

tion, and continues the same two-year, two-tier wage system for new hires they shamelessly agreed to last time, while pension and health benefit cuts wait in the wings.

The lack of mobilization against the City infuriated many workers, especially in the wake of the City's \$5 billion surplus and last December's militant three-day transit strike which shut down the city. Although many workers were ready for action, the union refused to lead any fight-backs in the face of on-going cuts, like surrounding City Hall, holding daily pickets, organizing workers to slow down, walk off the job or strike despite the state's fascist Taylor Law banning them. Nor did they expose how the City bosses use their surplus to benefit big business and developers while maintaining long-standing cuts and layoffs. And the Council certainly didn't expose the squeeze on workers to pay for the oil war in Iraq.

With the industrial unions increasingly in the bosses' hip pocket, the ruling class is stepping up its attack on municipal unions. Last year government workers in three states lost collective bargaining rights, bringing the total to 15. As with United Airlines and GM, civil service pensions are being gutted. This isn't about a regime change in DC 37, it's about fighting the brutal effects of the profit system. It's about the City bosses and the union uniting to preserve capitalism and squeeze the city workers. Workers have no "friends in high places" on either side of the bargaining table.

Moving the struggle forward means PLP'ers and other militant workers expanding the contract struggle to fight the brutal oil war, not pinning our hopes on yet another corrupt union election. We must mobilize workers against racist cuts, against slashing school lunches to fund war profiteers and against the profit system — the cause of all our problems. Turning the struggle into a "school for communism" would be the biggest victory workers could win. ☺

## Big Oil Ordered Iraq War

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conduct an immediate policy review toward Iraq, including military, energy, economic and political/diplomatic assessments."

This CFR/Baker report was delivered to the Pentagon by Dr. Edward Morse, chairman of the "Joint Task Force on Petroleum of the James A. Baker Institute and the Council on Foreign Relations." Palast reports that it was also "handed directly to Vice-President Dick Cheney" who "met secretly with CFR task force members...to go over the maps of Iraq's oil fields." Cheney than

used the Baker/CFR recommendations "as his own plan" to "take out Saddam." (Interestingly, Palast says, "The cash for drafting the extravagant report that was so protective of OPEC and Saudi interests" came from none other than "Khalid al-Turki of Saudi Arabia...")

For all this, tens of thousands of Iraqis had to die, as well as thousands of GI's (and tens of thousands wounded and maimed for life). Still another reason to fight for communist revolution, to destroy the monster of capitalism. ☺



# new orleans summer project

## Combine Re-building Tasks with Revolutionary Ideas

A group of students and teachers from LA had a great experience in New Orleans gutting houses, organizing residents and having a CHALLENGE sale. It revealed the great potential for bringing the paper to workers here.

This city gives us an opportunity to build the international working-class movement for communism. From the detention camps where thousands of residents are held in trailers surrounded by barbwire and armed government patrols, to the thousands of furious residents whose houses the government is seizing, residents and volunteers need communist vision, practice and politics along with involvement in the day-to-day organizational, survival and rebuilding tasks.

In barely half an hour, volunteers distributed 42 CHALLENGES to black and Latino immigrant workers at a local building and construction store. They donated over \$13. Few refused the paper. Many angry workers agreed that capitalism is the problem. The more areas CHALLENGE reaches — while we involve ourselves in the day-to-day

rebuilding tasks — the more ahead of the game we'll be. Ideas can become a material force to change the world. So discussions about the role of racism, nationalism, fascism, the government and working-class unity are very useful. While we were only there briefly, this work must continue and deepen. Without debates about the nature of the State, imperialism, and the abolition of wages, peo-

**'Many angry workers agreed that capitalism is the problem. The more areas CHALLENGE reaches — while we involve ourselves in the day-to-day rebuilding tasks — the more ahead of the game we'll be.'**

ple will become bogged down on the treadmill of reform and oblivious to a revolutionary solution.

One young volunteer from LA said, "I learned a lot of things about how the government works in New



On an abandoned wall in New Orleans, someone made a striking comparison to Iraq.

Orleans and what the system does. The government was late in helping the impoverished. They didn't provide any aid and stole the communities' money. If I go back, I'll take lots of CHALLENGES and information on what the government is doing. I'll help show people what to do to fight back. I'll tell them that when we fight as a group we're unstoppable. I would really like to see the people join and destroy the system." ☸

## Class Outlook Takes On Divisive Black Nationalism

My experience in New Orleans had its ups and its downs. From sweating while banging down walls, to crying from heart-breaking stories, to ideological struggles, at the end of the day I had a wonderful awakening experience.

The first day blew my mind away. We went on a levee tour that contrasted the 8-foot levees in the working-class neighborhood to the double walls of the wealthier neighborhoods. The orientation of the mass organization we were working with began with a question: "what does leadership look like?" After everybody gave their input, the leader of the meeting asked why no one said black in their definition of leadership. I figured it was the same reason no one said white: race doesn't matter when it comes to true leadership. He elaborated on why black leadership is good, beginning to piss me off with his Black Nationalist point of view. We had spoken about Black Nationalism before the trip, but I didn't expect it to be so blunt and open.

After orientation, we were off to the hard work of gutting homes and canvassing. I was extremely excited to be canvassing, but when that sun hit me and I began to feel dizzy, it wasn't as exciting anymore. We took an opportunity to talk to immigrant workers we met on the street. Using my knowledge of Spanish, I asked them about their living situation in New Orleans. They told us they get paid about \$100 every week when they work, but work is not guaranteed. We spoke to them about capitalism causing their current situation and explained the



Volunteers gutting homes in New Orleans

ideas of communism. They seemed open to the ideas and gratefully accepted CHALLENGE. This day I felt that I actually did some good.

One night during debriefing, a debate started on what affected us primarily, race or class and what people meant by "us." Was "us" just blacks or was "us" the working class. That's when the ideological struggle between communist ideas and black nationalist ideas sharpened. I expressed my class ideas while learning more about the shallowness of the Black Nationalist point of view. I was trying to make the point that unity around race is not going to defeat capitalism, but that only by uniting as a class can we truly smash racism and capitalism.

A few days later we had a mass sale of CHALLENGE in public housing. Residents told us that they took back their homes without the government's permission. That's what I like to hear. I basically had an amazing time in New Orleans and learned tremendously. I wouldn't have traded this experience for the world. I encourage every CHALLENGE reader to join PLP and go down to New Orleans and get involved in the fight against racism.

HIGH SCHOOL PROJECTEER

## Racist Gov't Devastates More People Than Katrina

The gutting of the house was awesome. We were all excited to empty the place to prevent it from being bulldozed, so my partner and I gutted two rooms in a day. We should have gutted every other day and gone organizing on the alternate days because both were really important.

When we went into the neighborhood, people related how the government didn't help them during or after they were flooded. Some agreed with us and said things like the government is "a piece of shit."

One unemployed worker who was staying with his mother said he had a "beef with the government." Before the flood he was a renter and the government wasn't giving him any money. He didn't own a home so he knew the government didn't want him back — what importance is a renter in New Orleans' poor neighborhoods?

Many young people made the connection about the lack of help and having deadlines for gutting their houses. One guy felt the government wants to bulldoze their houses and

claim the homeowners' land. His friend agreed but he didn't want to fight for anything because the results would be the same — nothing.

Another man who didn't live in the house he was gutting was strongly against the government. He, along with a few others volunteered with, and attended Survivor Council meetings where residents discussed their problems and results they sought.

I learned it wasn't Katrina that devastated people and their communities as much as it was the racist capitalists who left people to suffer, many with no financial help from FEMA. I understand more why we cannot rely on this capitalist system changing for our benefit. If PLP'ers stay in New Orleans for a longer period, we could really sharpen the ideas many workers and students already have, possibly winning them to our communist ideas.

A YOUNG COMRADE

## CHALLENGE Welcomed Amid Bosses' Attacks on Returnees

After an exhausting day of "gutting" a home in New Orleans's Lower 9th Ward, a few comrades sold CHALLENGE at a housing community downtown. The residents were happy to receive the paper and were eager to discuss their struggle to survive after the hurricane.

According to the residents, Military Police have been patrolling the community since they arrived in June. Although they were originally stationed in New Orleans to "protect" the 9th Ward, they seem to be patrolling poor black neighborhoods all across the city. On any given night, MP's can be seen interrogating youth and giving them full cavity searches.

Upon finally arriving home this summer, residents claimed that they were forced to pay nine months back pay for rent. Almost immediately after the hurricane the bosses decided that the housing community was livable and yet failed to notify the residents. Many residents could not afford their payments and

were forced onto the streets. Considering the community is located near the French Quarter, it is clear that the bosses want to bulldoze the community to build more expensive apartments.

This is another example of the racist bosses' persistent attack on the poor returning to their homes in New Orleans. The ruling class is vehemently attempting to remove black-working class communities. Yet their attacks have been met with powerful resistance. Many of the residents receive CHALLENGE and have joined the fight against ruling-class oppression of workers. The oppression in New Orleans resembles that of capitalist imperialism all across the world. Support for communism grows as more and more workers receive CHALLENGE. Eventually the working class, with communist leadership, will eliminate the ruling class and destroy capitalism forever! ☸

# Oaxaca Teachers' Movement Holds Potential PLP Growth

**OAXACA, MEXICO, Aug. 14** — After almost three months of struggle by 70,000 education workers — initially for a wage increase and better conditions for the students — now hundreds of thousands

have joined the movement. They're demanding the Governor resign, while many question whether changing one politician for another is enough. Some blame the whole capitalist system for the oppression of the workers.

Here, and world-wide, the system uses all its ideological weapons: the bosses' media, religion, their educational institutions and the whole state apparatus to oppress us. But when workers begin to break these chains, question the system and organize to fight it, the rulers show their true fascist nature — outright violence through their control of the police and the army. Young PLP'ers have brought communist ideas to many teachers through CHALLENGE and leaflets. (Full story next issue.)



# Black Workers, Youth Hit Streets Over Racist Cop Killing of 14-Year-Old

**CHICAGO, IL, August 11** — Last Monday (8/7) the racist Chicago Police Department shot a 14-year-old boy, Ellis Woodland Jr., in the Cabrini Green neighborhood. While Ellis is surviving in critical condition at a local hospital, the police are claiming they shot in "self-defense," since the boy had been playing BB guns with friends. However, many from the neighborhood said Ellis was already on his knees when the cops fired five bullets in his direction with the intent to kill. This action is part of the ongoing police terror in Cabrini, from which the city is looking to displace public housing residents.

Black workers and youth responded by taking to the streets. Many workers understood the importance of young people standing up and fighting back. This is a much safer tactic than simply trying to avoid the cops' continued attacks. On Wednesday hundreds took to the streets, despite a heavy police presence, to challenge the cops.



On Thursday, when many young people again marched, PLP members joined their ranks. CHALLENGES and leaflets condemning the police as tools of the ruling class who will always carry out racist terror were well-received around the neighborhood and within the march. Many took up our chants: "White cop, black cop, all the same! Racist terror is the name of their game!" and "Racist cops get off scot free, while workers live in misery!"

The march continued to city hall where the mayor sat in his office and refused us entry. When PLP'ers returned to the neighborhood on Friday, young people had developed a better understanding of the system we live under. "Yeah, I think Mayor Daley is racist," said one. The politicians and police act for the rich. This small rebellion has instilled in many the sense that we'll need to overthrow capitalism in order to really improve workers' lives.

# Racist 'Community Policing' Murders Newark Black Man

**NEWARK, NJ July 30** — A 26-year-old black man was murdered by a plainclothes Newark cop. Eyewitnesses, including a 10-year-old girl, saw the cops shoot Chakhan Nance when he was down on the ground and handcuffed. The cops claim that that Nance was a drug dealer who drew a gun. Everyone knows this is a bald face lie. Neighbors said that Nance looked out for local kids and would sometimes walk them home at night (Star-Ledger, 7/31/06).

This killing closely follows the inauguration of Mayor Corey Booker, 37, who became the top politician of New Jersey's largest city. The Star Ledger, voice of the big bosses like Prudential Insurance, backed Booker. Like Barack Obama, Booker is being

by linking his "Counter-terrorism Information Sharing Consortium" with the latest "homeland security" plans of the ruling class.

The killing of many young people in Newark over the past eighteen months has given Booker, the cops, and ultimately the rulers, the pretext they need to put Kelling's ideas into practice. It is true that we should be struggling with our young working-class brothers and sisters not to fall into gangs and drug dealing. These activities are anti-working class, and spring from the bosses' idea of "me first and screw everybody else".

But we must remember who the real criminals are as we fight to involve these young people in positive political and social activities. The reason young peo-

# CHALLENGE Spurs Debate on Mid-East War At Brooklyn Hospital

**BROOKLYN, NY** — At a hospital here, workers friendly to PLP responded to the latest crisis in the Middle East by increasing CHALLENGE sales. Workers contributed \$80, \$10 coming from a part-time environmental services worker who's a regular reader. A leaflet based upon CHALLENGE editorials analyzing the war was also distributed.

A call for a union meeting to discuss the current crisis encountered problems in finding a common time and place. So we went to each of our departments and raised the issue with our co-workers. Many were confused about the reasons for the war between Israel and Hamas in Palestine and Hezobollah in Lebanon. Getting their information from the capitalist newspapers and TV newscasts, workers couldn't understand the underlying crisis.

The leaflet helped clarify it.

A few workers stated that the politicians are always misleading us to support their views about the Middle East crisis. Surely, the politicians' interests don't represent the working class.

A few Jewish workers argued heatedly about the right of Israel to exist as a state. One worker cried, "Israel wants to live in peace." Another replied, "The Palestinian workers also wanted to live in peace." Still another worker stated that the only road to peace in the Middle East is the destruction of the profit wars for oil. So far, several workers expressed interest in joining a study group to learn more about PLP and the role of the past communist parties in that region.

# Deportation Raids Don't Intimidate Protestors

**HEMPSTEAD, L.I., NY, Aug. 7** — "No human being is illegal" read signs carried by dozens of residents here during a protest against raids by government immigration and custom agents. Several area workers have been arrested during these raids and face deportation. The agents come with photos of people they're looking for. If they don't find them, others without "proper" documents are arrested anyway.

One demonstrator said that since these



raids occurred, people fear even taking the bus. That's why protesting against these fascist, racist raids is so important, to show that terror won't stop workers from fighting back. (See article on Farmingville for PLP's analysis of the fight against racist anti-immigrant terror.)

# 'The reason young people are caught in this hell with all bad choices is because of the racist, profit-driven greed of the bosses.'

touted as a young, black political superstar for the bosses.

Booker's key campaign promise was to fight crime. As soon as he took office, he announced a "safe summer" initiative, flooding the streets with cops. His supporters called for a major "community policing" offensive. Community policing plans have always been used tactically by the bosses to convince workers to participate in and feel responsible for the fascist oppression going on in their neighborhoods instead of getting angry at the "outside" forces of a traditional police department.

Newark happens to be the home of community policing guru George Kelling, who teaches at Rutgers University School of Criminal Justice. Recall that Kelling wrote in the Wall Street Journal that the shooting of Amadou Diallo by NYPD cops was justified. This happened just before the jury let all of the murders off. Two years ago, Kelling went further

ple are caught in this hell with all bad choices is because of the racist, profit-driven greed of the bosses. After a mass exodus of manufacturing and other jobs from urban areas, the bosses left these cities to rot with lousy health care and jobs, deteriorating housing and schools and wide-scale police terror. These horrible social conditions have borne the poisoned fruit of gang activity and drug dealing as a false solution to this misery.

Youth are the future. In contrast to the capitalist system now oppressing them, communism will not beat down working-class youth. We will make them the centerpiece of our plan to overthrow this monstrous system, and build something much better for humanity. Kellings of the world beware: our day will come.



## Multi-nationals Dangerous for Farm Workers

Recently we visited a Mazahua community in the northern part of the state of Mexico. A farm worker agreed with us that we need a change in the economic system, since this one exploits and impoverishes farm workers.

Multi-national corporations like Wal-Mart are forcing a group of small producers here to sign a document mandating that their products be sold only in Wal-Mart stores, preventing them from finding best market price. Is this the “liberty of the free market”? The capitalists threaten not to give an allotment for starting production of organic products not yet planted if you don’t give in to their price. These are products the multi-nationals already want to buy.

Some think that unity of the community can stop this. But the reality of the profit system is that the bigger fish eat the smaller ones.

What happens when those who supposedly should support these same producers are pressured from above or by their bosses to convince the producers to give in? Where is the independence of the farm workers or of the indigenous towns that the government always brags it’s defending? The reality is, big capital rules, whether national or foreign.

University students have a great responsibility to farm workers, and not because some of us study nursing, mechanics, teaching, communication, sustainable development, etc. Without an understanding of what’s happening, we’ll be used to trap our communities and present them on a silver platter to the bosses, enabling them to continue to exploit farmworkers through the multi-nationals.

Students, just because we sit in an armchair, are we learning? Is life still rosy? Is the moon made out of cheese? What’s happened to critical thinking, and the consciousness to fight for a world where everything is for everyone? Mystical, cosmic vision won’t help us much, the god of the wind will not emancipate us, but the power we can build among all of us will. Long live Communism!

YOUNG RED STUDENT

## Winning Evangelicals To Oppose Iraq War

In May, 17 members of our small conservative church openly called for immediate troop withdrawal from Iraq/Afghanistan and against any attack on Iran (letter, CHALLENGE, 6/6). We mailed letters to 150 other churches of the same denomination in our area (rather than to the bosses’ politicians), asking them to join us.

One woman in our group took leadership and suggested that we hold a public forum (on June 27) to broaden the effort.

Hard work by the whole group, including ads in the weeklies, lots of fliers posted (“Who Would Jesus Bomb?”), refreshments and paid child care drew an integrated audience of nearly 100 people, mostly from the surrounding community. The panel included an imam from a neighboring mosque, the woman rabbi of a nearby synagogue, a woman soldier from Iraq Veterans Against the War, and a woman church member whose fiancée just returned from Iraq. One of the

church’s two pastors was moderator.

Considering the extent of anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic attacks in the U.S., the presence of a Muslim and a Jew speaking against the war in this church made a strong anti-racist statement. Also, the forum benefited considerably from the strong presence of women panelists. A lengthy period of questions and discussion followed, with all panel members engaged by people from the audience afterwards.

We’re proud that a strong voice in the church on the war has now been heard, involving the community in a small but significant way. Although the forum’s tone was pacifist, the racist, imperialist nature of the war was exposed. The original group of 17 has grown somewhat since May. All receive CHALLENGE regularly.

RED CHURCHGOER

## Anti-War Churchgoers Expose Pro-War Liberals

I’m a comrade working in the social justice section of a large, inter-racial, politically “liberal” church. Days after the Israeli bombing of Lebanon began, the senior minister preached about good and evil, weakly referring to Israel, Hezbollah, Syria, Iran and the U.S. in this vein.

My friends and I began talking about a response to the killing and to highlight key political ideas, such as the role of oil and imperialism in the Mid-East, the political consequences of U.S. occupation of Iraq and Israeli occupation of Gaza and the West Bank and the negative role of nationalism and religion in the region. We proposed a forum about the situation to the minister in charge of our section, to be held the following week, and requested an announcement in the church bulletin and from the pulpit. Foreseeing this was unlikely to happen, we distributed 400 notices about the forum after service.

The following Sunday the senior minister preached about God as our “soul’s roommate,” not mentioning the Mid-East. Some people in social justice were dismayed. I responded that his silence indicated his support for the ruling-class position coming from Congress and both Democratic and Republican politicians.

The Sunday of the forum the senior minister mentioned a growing “conflagration that could lead to nuclear war” without naming the U.S. or any particular place in the Mid-East. Then he introduced his invited guests, referring to their “important contributions” — Democrats Charles Rangel and Nancy Pelosi (who supported the House vote the week before to give India nuclear technology and information).

Following the service over 40 people attended the social justice forum at which comrades and friends effectively put forward our political perspective. The group agreed to organize a larger forum in the fall and to picket the U.S. Mission to the UN the following week.

A small group did picket the Mission, holding signs saying, “Stop the wars in Iraq and Lebanon”; “U.S. Out of the Middle East”; “No attack on Iran,” and others. The police reacted quickly to our group because we hadn’t “asked for permission in advance.” In other words, the police hadn’t been able to barricade us and divide us from the mostly friendly passers-by. They will no doubt call the church to “request” advance notice next time.

The contradictions between the church

higher-ups and our political ideas will sharpen. Comrades working in ruling-class organizations and institutions can expect a long and difficult struggle as many people begin to question what’s happening in the world, draw political lessons from the strengths and weaknesses of the old communist movement and realize that communism is not dead. PLP’ers’ consistent efforts to raise our ideas and give political leadership in many arenas will lead to smaller and larger victories along the way to overthrowing capitalism worldwide and fighting for a communist society.

A COMRADE

## Rebel Soldiers Help Katrina Victims

Although it has been almost a year since hurricane Katrina hit, New Orleans still looks like the cities currently being devastated by the imperialism in the Middle East. With police and National Guard patrolling the desolate streets, graffiti-marked homes saying “Baghdad” and “FEMA Kills” remind residents and volunteers that New Orleans is still a war zone.

Recently a group of volunteers organized a “gutting block party” to help gut homes in order meet a deadline set by the city that threatens to seize and demolish the homes.

Despite the vacant streets and a lack of electricity or running water, the local community center was alive with volunteers and residents celebrating a revival of working-class solidarity. The aroma of good food and the echo of music flooded the streets as everyone geared up to gut homes.

To the dismay of many, the National Guard showed up to inspect the celebration. While many were angered by their presence, one PL’er struggled with two soldiers about what the organization was doing. Soon the soldiers became eager to help, and eventually brought water and ice that they stole from their barracks. This act of insubordination demonstrates the potential to win soldiers to the PLP to help fight for communism. The more soldiers are won to fight for communism, the fewer workers will die for the bosses’ profits.

Gutting homes proved to be even more trying. Many homes had not been entered since Katrina. In some, the debris was so great that the doors would not open. Many residents requested that sentimental items such as photos be recovered, but once inside it became clear that the destruction left little to nothing that was recoverable. The destruction was a living testament to the fact that capitalism, whether it is in the Middle East or in New Orleans, destroys the lives of workers.

In the end, there wasn’t much that could have dampened the spirits of the clean-up effort. Working side-by-side with the residents provided inspiration by reminding everyone of the direct impact they were having on the lives of their working-class brothers and sisters in New Orleans. Despite the alienation felt by many of the Katrina survivors trying to rebuild their lives, alienation paled in the face of working-class solidarity that day. PL must continue to work directly with residents bringing not only their communist mes-



sage, but also their willingness to share in the hard work of rebuilding the lives of workers in New Orleans.

SOUTHERN RED

## Raising PLP’s Ideas At Pro-Immigrant March, Union Convention

On July 19, three of us, teachers in the same union, joined the rally at the end of the latest march for immigration reform in Chicago. Over 10,000 workers and youth listened to Democratic Congressman Luis Gutierrez, who wants to be mayor, and others speak in favor of legalization for all undocumented immigrants and suspension of all deportations.

The crowd was much smaller than the 400,000 who marched May 1. However, it had the same patriotic display of thousands of U.S. flags and a speakers’ platform loaded with labor leaders and Democrats. More marches are being planned for September in Chicago and on the East and West coasts. We need to prepare now to be part of these mass, multi-racial marches of workers and to have a clearly identified Party presence to expose the liberals’ plans to lead us to more fascism and war.

Self-critically, we didn’t have a PLP contingent there with red flags, revolutionary chants and speeches, leaflets and CHALLENGES, as we did on May 1. We must seize these opportunities to reach out to masses of workers with our revolutionary line.

We were at this rally to sharpen the contradiction between reform and revolution. I raised this issue within my union’s executive committee and with friends in two other locals. As elected delegates to our recent national convention, we fought to get our union on record in opposition to “any immigration policy that further militarizes the U.S. border, hinders workers’ abilities to organize, imposes high fees and fines on those seeking legalization, pushes immigrant youth into the military as a path to legalization and citizenship or criminalizes individuals or groups who support or assist immigrants regardless of their status.” Although this was not adopted, it showed that by continuing the struggle and sharpening our communist line within it, we can return stronger to the next convention.

Given the limits of the convention, we were still able to explain the need for communist revolution to many delegates, held a small dinner/forum which included three new delegates and distributed 200 CHALLENGES. About 2,000 leaflets

continued on page 7

# Ted Kennedy, AFT Leaders: Partners in Racism and Imperialist War

[The last issue described the anti-imperialist struggle at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) convention.]

When Peace and Justice Caucus members heard that Senator Ted Kennedy would speak, many argued that, “He’s so popular, we can’t demonstrate against him.” A few called him “anti-war” although he votes for every war-spending bill. Most thought he was “not very strong” on immigration. But Kennedy’s special role is to get immigrant youth into the armed forces. At the AFT convention he put a liberal face on the AFT leaders’ pro-imperialist policies. Right after his speech they trotted out their “special order” supporting Israel’s attack on Lebanon.

The Kennedy family has carried out and supported every imperialist adventure since JFK sent 16,000 “advisors” to Vietnam to jumpstart the Vietnam War. Ted Kennedy backed Clinton’s bombing of Kosovo. Criticizing Bush for not taking sufficient advantage of 9/11, he called for “multi-lateral” imperialism in order to project U.S. power far into the future.

Kennedy’s AFT convention speech was mostly “motherhood and apple pie” — higher minimum wage, women’s rights, etc. But he emphasized his solidarity with AFT founder Albert Shanker, who led a racist “strike” in 1968, pitting mostly white teachers against black and Latino working-class parents. Kennedy also praised former AFT President Sandra Feldman, a member of the Rockefeller-led Council on Foreign Relations.

One AFT member recalled that, “When the racists were organizing against school integration in Boston 30 years ago and PLP was fighting them in the streets, Kennedy met with them and concluded they weren’t racist at all.”

Unfortunately, many delegates thought Kennedy’s position on immigration — reflected in Resolution #1 — was also

“motherhood and apple pie,” a dangerous illusion! Said Kennedy (May 2006):

“60,000 immigrants are fighting in the U.S. armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan today... The [immigration] reform debate is [about]... the even stronger America we hope to become.... [O]ur military leaders... are recruiting a diverse fighting force to think in new ways as we deal with our dangerous world.” He has bragged that his immigration bill would send many more immigrant youth into the military. He also supports:

- Doubling the U.S. border patrol within five years and using more National Guard troops to police the borders;
- Fortifying U.S. borders with fences, high-tech devices and vehicle barriers, and placing permanent checkpoints on highways inside the U.S.;
- Biometric ID for immigrants and a universal electronic eligibility system for all U.S. employers;
- A “guest worker” program to provide cheap labor for the bosses;
- A “path to citizenship” so filled with obstacles (thousands in fines, requirement of continuous employment, etc.) that few will gain it, but will build patriotism among immigrants;
- Denying legalization to anyone who belongs to a “totalitarian” [read: communist] party or whom the Attorney General “believes” (no evidence required!) to be a “terrorist” or a relative of a “terrorist”; and,
- The DREAM ACT which offers the bait of citizenship for undocumented youth who join the military.

Kennedy’s stance reflects a critical shortage in the U.S. military. “The long-term neglect of U.S. ground forces has caused serious problems in the Iraqi and Afghan campaigns. If not corrected, ... this

neglect will cause even worse problems in the future.” (Frederick Kagan, Foreign Affairs, 6/2006)

The number of non-citizens in the military has nearly tripled since 1999. Non-citizens are half as likely as the U.S.-born to leave before completing their enlistment.

Kennedy notes that “immigration will be the only source of growth in the prime age labor force in America in the next two decades.” Of the 36.6 million 18- to 24-year-old potential recruits nationwide, about 1.5 million, or 4%, are legal residents but not citizens. About 400,000 undocumented youth are also in that age group. “No doubt many would be willing to serve for some set period in return for one of the world’s most precious commodities — U.S. citizenship,” wrote Council on Foreign Relations fellow Max Boot (LA Times, 2/2006)

Paul Bucha, Congressional Medal of Honor Society President, sums it up:

“[T]here is a standard by which to judge whether America is correct to maintain a generous legal immigration policy: Have immigrants and their children and grandchildren been willing to fight and die for the United States of America? The answer... remains a resounding ‘yes.’”

Young immigrant and black soldiers face racist treatment from the brass, who also bombard them with racist stereotypes of workers from other countries to justify killing as acceptable. Communist leadership within the ranks will build the fight against racism, help sharpen these contradictions and point the way forward to revolution.

Along the way, no task will be more important than tearing the sheep’s clothing off liberal wolves like Ted Kennedy. ☹

## Letters Continued

placed immigration reform and other struggles in the context of the inter-imperialist rivalry: main contradiction moving events in the world today.

Whether it’s immigration reform, education reform, or the Iraq war, the U.S. ruling class must bend every aspect of society toward maintaining its current dominant position among the world’s capitalist powers. Workers will never gain this understanding from the liberal Gutierrez, who wants to guarantee the continued exploitation of immigrants for cheap labor and to increase the number of immigrant youth in the military. No matter what legislation is adopted, immigrants and citizens alike will be sacrificed to keep U.S. bosses the number one super-

power. PLP can only bring this understanding to other workers if we’re embedded in this movement, fighting for our politics.

After our convention experience, we needed no convincing to join the July 19 marchers. At the final rally, we used the time during the speeches to discuss two letters in the July 19 CHALLENGE. They described the New Orleans Summer Project, including how imported immigrant labor is being used there to pit black and Latino workers against one another. Afterwards we made plans to invite other friends and co-workers to a meeting to bring them into our discussion. Introducing communist ideas into our reform struggles now will make next year’s convention an even greater opportunity to build our Party.

RED TEACHER



Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT = New York Times, GW Guardian Weekly (UK) FT = Financial Times

### Capitalist writer is driven to Marx’s idea

We have all heard corporate executives say that American workers are paid too much: that our industries cannot compete with foreign makers because our labor costs are so high that if we used American union labor, we would see profits evaporate....

Now you would think that if this high-priced American labor were in fact pressing corporate backs to the wall, profits would be stagnant or falling. But in fact, in the last several years.... profits are by far the highest they have ever been....

But why are we outsourcing, why are we moving our work overseas, if our corporations are so profitable? And... How come — as an average number — basically none of the growth goes to the ordinary worker’s wages?....

Could it be that just the threat of moving jobs overseas (very few have in fact actually been moved as yet) keeps labor cowed? Is the vast labor force of Asia and the Third World in fact something like the “the reserve army of the unemployed” that Karl Marx described in his critique of capitalism? (Ben Stein, NYT, 8/6)

### Lebanon cease-fire looks a bit rocky

Ehud Olmert, Israeli prime minister... insisted Israel had the right to strike back at Hizbollah in the future. “We will pursue them everywhere and at all times,” he said. “We

have no intention of asking anyone’s permission.”

Israeli soldiers killed six Hizbollah fighters soon after the “cessation of hostilities.” (FT, 8/15)

Will your kids live better? Most say no

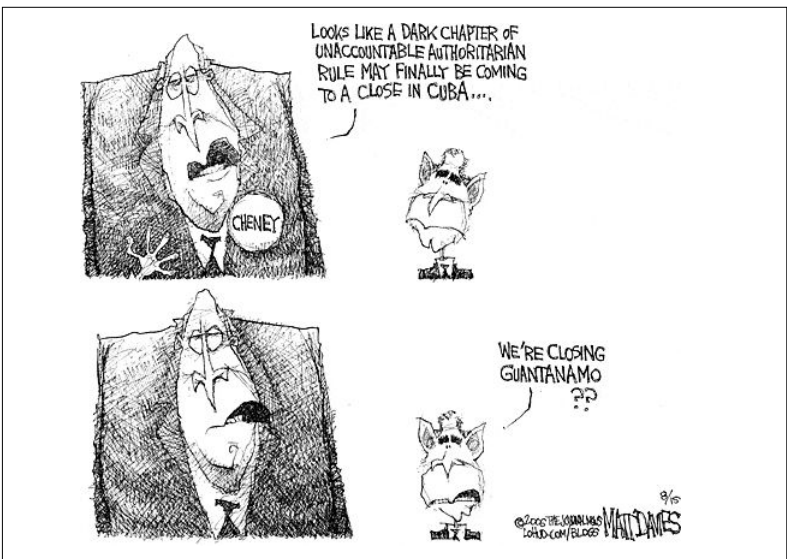
In the most recent New York Times/CBS News poll,... people were asked how their children’s living standards would one day compare with their own... This is the first time in the 12 years that question has been asked that fewer than half of respondents predicted that their children’s lives would be better....

...A stunning 57 percent of Americans say they expect the next five years to bring periods of widespread unemployment... (NYT, 8/2)

### Top British cop says Muslims are targets

One Britain’s top police officers this week warned that anti-terrorism laws are discriminating against Muslims and that law enforcement agencies are running a “real risk” of criminalizing ethnic minorities....

In Britain people of Asian appearance have borne the brunt of an increase in stop and search. Police have said the practice is “intelligence-led”, but Mr Ghaffur appeared



to cast doubt on this defence; “these practices tend to be based more on physical appearance than being intelligence-led.” (GW, 8/11)

### Poverty drags kids down in school

“The evidence is pretty clear that the better their housing, the better kids do on tests,” said Jack Jennings president of the Center on Education Policy, a nonpartisan group....

Reforms aimed at education alone are doomed to come up short, unless they are tied to changes in economic and social policies to lessen the gaps children face outside the classroom.

A lack of affordable housing makes poorer children more transient, and so more prone to switch schools midyear, losing progress. Higher rates of lead poisoning, asthma and inadequate pediatric care also fuel low achievement, along with something as basic as the lack of eyeglasses. (NYT, 8/9)



# Spain: Anti-Franco Resistance Inspired World's Workers

(Part I described the Asturian Miners revolutionary uprising and commune in October 1934, which was viciously crushed by troops led by the fascist general Francisco Franco.)

On July 18, 1936, less than two years after the Asturian miners' insurrection, Franco and other fascist generals led an attempted coup against the Republican government elected five months earlier. This led to the bloody three-year-long Civil War.

The Republican government was a united front composed of social-democrats, liberals and leftists, including the PCE (Communist Party of Spain). At the beginning of the war, the PCE was relatively small, but it correctly stated that the government's hesitation to jail and punish the fascist generals like Franco, responsible for the bloody repression of the Asturian miners, was one reason for the attempted coup. The PSOE (Socialist Party) was the main force in the government. It was a social-democratic party which treated the fascist forces with kid gloves. It did nothing to purge the Franco-led Colonial Army which brutally put down rebellion in Spain's African colonies. (See box on the Popular Front.)

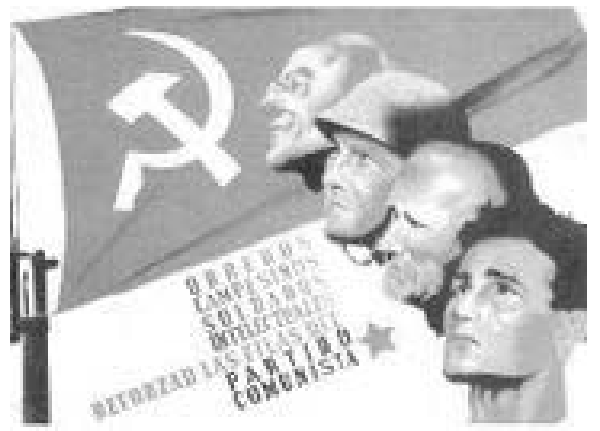
During the Civil War that followed the failed coup, nearly a million people were killed. The fascist Axis (Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy) helped the fascist forces with all their might. Mussolini sent up to 70,000 Italian troops to fight alongside Franco. The Nazis sent Franco its latest weapons (including Stuka dive-bombers and pilots to fly them) to test their latest weapons and its blitzkrieg war strategy, later used against the rest of Europe and the Soviet Union during World War II.

Only the Soviet Union, and to a lesser extent Mexico's nationalist government of Lázaro Cárdenas (which had nationalized its foreign-owned oil companies), helped the Republican side. Thousands of communists, socialists and other anti-fascists from 70 countries volunteered to fight in the

International Brigades alongside the Republican forces, 2,500 (mostly communists) coming from the U.S. in the Lincoln Brigade.

Meanwhile, the Western "democracies" — supposedly "neutral" — really helped the fascists. France closed its borders, forcing the Soviets to send help on ships, which were attacked and many sunk by Mussolini's submarines. Franco's forces got all the supplies they needed through Portugal, the latter being ruled by fascist dictator Salazar. The U.S. "neutrality" did not stop Texaco from selling hundreds of millions of dollars worth of oil to Franco's army.

Many, including Trotskyites, anarchists and others, have always attacked the Soviet Union's role during the Civil War. But the fact is that without Soviet help, the war would probably have been lost much earlier. The Soviets supplied 750 fighter planes to the Republican side (200 built in Catalonia in the middle of the war). These planes were crucial in the important battle of the Ebro River.



After three years of heroic defense by the workers of Spain and their internationalist supporters, the fascists won. The imperialist "democracies" that helped Franco were also helping Hitler, hoping he would destroy the Soviet Union. But after taking most of Europe from 1939 to 1941 with relative ease, Hitler hoped to do the same with the then communist-led Soviet Union. He organized the largest invasion force in history, a four-million-strong army, including troops from many other European countries (including Franco's Blue Legion) to try to crush the Soviets. After initial Nazi successes, the Soviet Red Army

and masses of people fought back, and, at the Battle of Stalingrad the entire German 6th Army was encircled and surrendered to the Soviets in February, 1943. They then defeated the Nazis in the battle of the Kursk Salient, involving over 7,000 tanks, the largest such battle in the history of warfare. After the Soviets defeated the bulk of the Nazi war machine, the Allies finally launched the Second Front in France on June 6, 1944, fighting a much-weakened Nazi army.

Although the workers and allies of Spain lost to Franco's fascist hordes, they showed the world that fascism could be taken on. Their example inspired all the anti-fascist forces which, led by the Red Army, eventually crushed the Nazis. ☺

## 'Popular Front' Did Not Lead to Revolution

In February, 1936, Spain's leftist parties formed a so-called "Popular Front," which included communists in the capitalist government. The Popular Front advocated that — with the advent of fascism and imperialist war — communists should form an alliance with social-democrats and some "good" bosses to preserve capitalist democracy and peace. That meant communists gave up fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and limited the fight against fascism to what the social democrats agreed to.

In Spain, this ruled out an alliance of the anti-fascist forces with the anti-colonial rebels in Spanish Morocco, to avoid offending French colonialism. It meant going along with the social-democrats' half-hearted and incompetent leadership of the war. They were more anxious to hold back communists than to defeat fascists. It meant not organizing guerilla war in fascist-held areas. Thus, the communists didn't try to take power, even when there was no other hope to defeat fascism. So, in this first "trial run" of the Popular Front, signs were clear that this strategy cannot achieve communist workers' power, the only way to defeat capitalism — the cause of fascism — once and for all. ☺



Communism means a society where people work for the collective welfare and get back what they need from society, and in which classes have been abolished. To accomplish this goal fully will require a long period of working-class power. Marx and the majority in the old communist movement believed that even beginning to move toward this goal — by immediately ending the wage system that is inherited from capitalism and distributing according to need — should also be put off to the distant future. Some communists, however, argued for replacing wages immediately with distribution according to need.

During its fight for power, the Communist Party of China (CPC) did just that within the Party, Red Army, and CPC-run factories, distributing food, clothes and incidentals mainly on the basis of need — the so-called "supply system." They did, however, allow small differences based on rank or assignment [1]. The Japanese army observed, "If [a captured Chinese soldier] willingly gives the good food to others and quietly takes the worst, generally he will be a Communist." [2]

Several years after the CPC victory, they returned to wages. While many resisted this decision, CPC leaders believed that the promotion of production should be their main goal, and that the only way to promote production was to ally with local capitalists and rich peasants — a policy called "New Democracy." New Democracy ended up by strengthening pro-capitalist forces and leading to the future restoration of capitalism, as alliances with the enemy always does. [3]

To achieve their goal, the CPC attempted a massive increase in industrial production with the "Great Leap Forward," and large-scale people's communes were formed. Many included communal meals, a step in the direction of distribution according to need. Inspired by the communes, Mao and other party leaders discussed returning to the supply system:

"Why must we grasp a wages system? This is offering concessions to the bourgeoisie .... For a long time [our Party] has implemented the free supply system. From sev-

eral tens of thousands of persons it grew to several million, right up to liberation.... In work everyone was industrious and in warfare all were courageous. There was absolutely no reliance on material incentives, but rather a reliance on the drumbeat of revolutionary spirit." [4]

The idea that the communes could lead to communism was also discussed in the press in 1958. The People's Daily published an article calling for the return of the supply system, [5] and a big Shanghai paper argued that the idea that communism leads to laziness is a capitalist and feudal point of view. [6] Despite the promise of the people's communes, the Great Leap eventually led to a famine in which many people died. This failure was based in part on mistakes in economic planning by the left-wing forces and in part on floods and drought, and was used by the right-wing CPC leaders to attack the Great Leap as a whole and to undermine egalitarianism in the peoples' communes. [7]

In May 1966, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) began and "was officially directed against" the "few" people in the party and the government who were "taking the capitalist road." Many workers, students, and peasants fought to overthrow the revisionist "red bourgeoisie" that was running China, and some wanted to go directly to communism. [8] In 1967, worker activists in Shanghai, moving in the direction of distribution according to need, demanded an end to the division into permanent and part-time workers, and demanded "equal pay for workers irrespective of individual productivity."

After years of mass movements, including some armed struggle, the Left was defeated in the GPCR. Deng Xiaoping, chief of the CPC capitalist-roaders came to power in 1978, dismantled the communes, and restored capitalism in China.

Despite this defeat, the experience gained from the monumental struggles of Chinese workers, students and peasants show us the way forward to communism: Distribution according to need, which necessitates the abolition of wages, is not only possible, but nothing else can

## Workers and Peasants Practiced Communism in the Chinese Revolution



prevent the rise of a new capitalist class and rid the world of capitalism — forever.

### Footnotes:

[1] Mark Selden, *The Yenan Way in Revolutionary China*, Cambridge: Harvard University, 1971, pp. 152 – 157.

[2] Kitahara Tatsuo, Japanese army specialist on communism, quoted in Saburo Ienaga, *The Pacific War, 1931-1945*, New York: Pantheon, 1978, p. 94.

[3] See the PLP article "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the Reversal of Worker's Power in China," <http://www.plp.org/rr3/gpcr.html>.

[4] *Miscellany of Mao Tse-Tung Thought (1949-1968)*, Joint Publications Research Service, JPRS 61269-2, 20 Feb. 1974, vol. 1, p. 233.

[5] L. Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Berkeley: University of California, 1974, p. 186.

[6] "Disprove the 'Communism Breeds Laziness' Theory," Wen Hui Bao, October 23, 1958, translated in *Survey of China* Mainland Press, #1900.

[7] F. Teiwes and W. Sun, *China's Road to Disaster: Mao, Central Politicians, and Provincial Leaders in the Unfolding of the Great Leap Forward 1955-1959*, Armonk: M.E. Sharp, 1999, pp. 213 - 222.

[8] See "Whither China?" by the "Ultra-Left" group Sheng-wulian, in K. Mehnert, *Peking and the New Left*, Berkeley, University of California, 1969.

[9] J. Daubier, *A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, New York: Vintage, 1974, pp. 124 – 131; J. Domes, *China After the Cultural Revolution*, Berkeley: University of California, 1977, pp. 85 - 88.